

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. Any honest company will clearly state all fees up front in a way that is clearly understood, and fully explained to the customer.

When you allow and encourage companies to use deceptive advertising, and charge customers hidden or deceptive fees, you are responsible for creating a business atmosphere where lies and deception are the real law.

The standards you set for these companies reflects your own personal morality and ethics. If you have any, you need to set better ones for these companies who are supposed to be serving the consumer, not ripping them off.

What you do says as much about your own character as it does these companies.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.